

VZCZCXYZ4268
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSQ #0173/01 0641624
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 041624Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY SKOPJE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7140
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE 0236
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUESEN/SKOPJE BETA
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2216
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SKOPJE 000173

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/05/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NATO](#) [MK](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: MACEDONIA: PREPARING FOR NIMETZ NAME TALKS, ROUND
II

REF: SKOPJE 87 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: P/E CHIEF SHUBLER, REASONS 1.4(B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

(C) 1. In separate meetings March 4, the closest advisors to PM Gruevski and President Crvenkovski gave us the latest Macedonian thinking on the eve of the arrival of UN mediator Ambassador Nimetz. Even though the PM's and the President's offices suggested different red lines in the name negotiations, the overall feeling here is that the Macedonians are on the verge of resigning themselves to a veto, while faintly hoping for an eleventh-hour miracle by the U.S. The Charge stressed that only active engagement in the Nimetz process could lead to a positive outcome. End summary.

NIMETZ'S NEW IDEAS ARE WELCOME, BUT OUR POSITION IS FIRM...

(C) 2. With the PM's Chief of Staff Martin Protoger, the Charge stressed the importance of flexibility and continuous positive engagement in the Nimetz process. Protoger said the PM would "look at any new ideas Nimetz might have," but noted that the PM's position remained that a name for bilateral use with Greece only was the only viable compromise. The Charge encouraged Protoger to look for a way for Macedonia to take full advantage of the Nimetz process and defend Macedonia's interests while showing a willingness for compromise. Putting a positive proposal forward would give Nimetz and the rest of NATO something to work with, the Charge emphasized. He urged that Macedonia give Nimetz a proposal that included acceptable elements of Nimetz's latest proposal. For example, one or more acceptable names from the Nimetz list for use at the UN, NATO, etc.; a statement in the agreement that says other countries can decide whether to use the constitutional name or the international name; a line in an inside page of the passport that states the fact that Macedonia uses the international name at the UN, NATO, etc. and in some cases bilaterally.

DON'T QUIT

(C) 3. The Charge assured Protoger that the U.S. strongly supports the UN process and urged that Macedonia not quit. A frustrated Protoger responded that the citizens wanted "NATO, but not with broken dignity and honor." He pointedly asked if the U.S. had a Plan B in case of a veto. Without speculation on "day after" scenarios, the Charge predicted

that Macedonia's engagement, or lack of engagement, in the Nimetz process would largely determine the perceptions of all NATO allies. If Macedonia took a step forward by advancing a constructive proposal that addressed Greece's concerns, Macedonia would gain international sympathy and would be in a much better position in the event of a veto.

SCOPE OF USE -- A REPLACEMENT FOR FYROM

(C) 4. In a separate meeting the same day with P/E Chief, President Crvenkovski's Chief of Staff Natasha Savova reported that President Crvenkovski had instructed Ambassador Dimitrov the day before to tell interlocutors in Washington that Macedonia would be willing to use "Democratic Republic of Macedonia" everywhere the provisional name FYROM was used, including at the UN and in other international organizations, but not bilaterally or on passports. She said the President preferred that such a proposal for the scope of use come from Nimetz. Savova said she did not know whether PM Gruevski would accept that formulation, but added that Crvenkovski was prepared to "go public" with the proposal if Gruevski rejected it. (Note: Crvenkovski's threat to go public with this broader proposal (compared to the PM's "only with Greece" position) is at odds with his desire to have Nimetz make such a proposal. End note.)

COMMENT

(C) 5. Our meetings today and Charge's conversation with the Foreign Minister on Friday suggest that the Macedonian side feels heavily inclined to resign itself to a veto, while harboring waning hopes that the U.S. will somehow save the day. The best hope for resolving this is to convince them not to give up, and instead take a proactive stance with

Nimetz.
NAVRATIL